241 782 [825] *chin-uch* (May 20–June 8), an offering is made to the supernatural being which reigns over it. The natives have vague notions of the nature of this being. They say that *uch* is the name of a small insect which spoils the pozole and, also, of the *tlacuache* or *zarigueya* which often destroys the milpa. The offering, hung at the entrance of the hut, consists of a ball of pozole wrapped in plantain leaf, a red chile, a tortilla, an ear of corn, and a little stick like the kind used to turn the ear cooking over hot coals. 241 782 787 All objects are minute in size. When the offering achieves its purpose, on the completion of a 20-day period, the atmosphere becomes hazy "as if there were smoke." It is explained that "the chin-uch burned its house," which forecasts a favorable sun for development of the milpa. If such a sign should not appear on the indicated date or at the end of the next month of *mukul-uch* (June 9–28), the forecast is ominous and indicates that the rains will be excessive, greatly harming the milpa.

778 796 [184] Another mukul-mixa is performed in Oxchuc, in homage to the hill called Ikal-Ajau, near the ceremonial center, of which the Indians say "it is a living hill." The name of the hill is that of the ancient hill worshipped by the Oxchueqeños. Nuñez de la Vega (in Becerra, 1933, p. 293) reports: "Those of Oxchuc and other towns of Los Llanos venerate very much the idol which they call Icalajau, which means principal Negro or [789] lord of the Negroes." This Mass, performed the first days of June, prevents locusts and other plagues from coming.

241 78 Once the crop is in the granary, other family prayers are said before the household cross, to give thanks for the good received and to petition the supernatural beings to protect the grain from insects and rodents.

Other Subsistence Resources

262 235 [231] [431] Other food resources include raising chickens and pigs. A family averages about 10 chickens, using the eggs as money when

[P. 202-B]

4: Villa Rojas E-4, 5 (1938-1944) 1969
NV9 Tzeltal NV9

787 776 been taken away by the local authorities and sent to the Indians' Affairs Office in San Cristobal.

Life Cycle

842 183 *Pregnancy and Childbirth*

The strongest desire of every Tzeltal couple is to create a numerous family, preferably boys. The relationship between sexual intercourse and pregnancy is well understood among the Indians. They know that pregnancy lasts nine months and they keep a good count of it. On the other hand, there are ideas about the possibility of the woman being influenced by old men or "the owners of the nagual," who can interrupt pregnancy and change the fetus from one woman to another. This is why a woman who thinks she is pregnant for three or four months suddenly realizes that she carries nothing any more, while another one, maybe her neighbor, finds herself in advanced pregnancy, giving birth a few months later. It is to be stressed, however, that these changes can take place only among married women.

843 [833] 843 789

844 [181] In conservative villages (Tenejapa, Oxchuc, Cancuc) there is no professional midwife. Children are delivered by the oldest women in the neighborhood.

[757] [237] When labor begins, the first thing is to give the mother a beverage made of powdered opossum tail dissolved in boiling water. It is very common for Indians to have a dry tail hanging next the fireplace. The woman kneels at labor, facing the midwife. The husband's belt or the woman's rebozo is tied very tightly around the upper part of the abdomen to prevent the child from "going up again." The mother can also help herself by seizing a rope tied to the roof, or taking firm hold of any post of the house. The umbilical cord is chopped with a machete or cut with scissors, supported on an ear of corn. This ear is afterwards used as seed and is considered very fertile.

[241] [824]

[757] When labor has finished, the mother is given another hot beverage of pepper,

[P 223-B]

844 cloves, and corncake, to keep her "warm
[757] and fertile." The placenta can be burned,
[842] thrown to the dogs, or deeply buried in case
the mother does not want another preg-
• [789] nancy soon. The umbilical cord is put under
a three-stone fireplace if the baby is a girl,
on top of a tree if it is a boy so that he may
become brave and agile when adult.

846 A few hours after childbirth, at the latest
515 the next day, both mother and child take a
temascal (steam bath). Some women stay
in the temascal until they feel completely
recovered.

Childhood and Adolescence

789 During the first weeks of life, children are
774 in danger of losing their souls because their
inexperience makes them an easy prey to
the naguales and bad spirits who wander
around. As protection, mothers place a small
[237] piece of beeswax at the back of the child's
head or tie, as a bracelet, a red or blue
thread around the wrist. If none of these
precautions are taken, the mother has to
cover with branches the paths her child
walks, so that his soul can easily find its way
in case he loses it.

789 Because of all these dangers, fathers al-
852 ways try to perform the ceremony of "seed
774 the soul of the child" as soon as possible. It
[553] is during this ceremony that the child is
given a name, later confirmed according to
[608] Catholic ritual at the ceremonial center. A
very important aspect of the ceremony is
selection of the godparents.

753 *Sickness and Death*

776 Most sicknesses come from infection or
[888] malnutrition. To the natives, however, ill-
nesses have a supernatural cause and are
ascribed either to the anger of gods and
spirits or to old people who have a nagual
or who can throw a spell. The most frequent
explanation is that naguales or supernatural
beings are acting against people. They can
adopt human or animal form or appear as

[P 224-A]

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

he is whipped by the girl's father for a thief. The girl is stripped to the waist and whipped by her mother. With this the marriage is legalized. As the first act of their true married life, the girl makes posole and offers it to her parents. The boy is under obligation to bring presents of bread, chocolate, aguardiente, etc., to his parents-in-law. 584 585

There are no formal restrictions of marriage, but the Church exercises a general influence against wedding brother and sister, cousins, or other relatives forbidden by Christian doctrine. In this, owing to the disposition of the Indians, and to the purely tribal character of marriage, which is not regarded by them as a religious or governmental matter, the Church is only partially successful. Informal unions actually do occur between brother and sister, apparently without any ceremony, the pair merely continuing to live together, their family relationship slowly changing into that of a married couple. That such a wife's status has some regularity in their eyes is shown by the fact that she has the same position in funeral rites as an ordinary wife. 582 177 178 588

It is probably due to the negative influence of the Church that the various important crises in the life of an individual, ordinarily marked by such colourful ceremonies among primitive people, here are distinguished by very little of ritualistic observance. For description of the main events in the life course, we were again dependent on Señor Tovilla, whose information, given with little change below, checked entirely with the result of other inquiries. The funeral ceremonies were observed at first hand, after the fight described at El Encanto; for them, accordingly, I have used my own notes. 115 126

When a woman is about to give birth to a child, a midwife—an older woman with some knowledge of herbs—is summoned. A few days before parturition, the woman is carefully tended by the midwife, well fed with choice food, and provided with a little rum. At the moment of giving birth, the midwife prays that the child may be brought forth happily. The mother kneels, and the midwife prepares to receive the child with a new cloth. Meantime the father is told to stay outside the house, or may be allowed to help in minor matters. 844

It is said that at Tenejapa the women go out into the woods to give birth untended, coming back with the child.

The baby is given Christian baptism. 852

A child's soul is considered to be particularly delicate, and therefore liable to magic influence. If the people of the house must go 789 [774]

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

789 away, leaving it alone, an ear of yellow corn is left with it, that its soul may not be stolen. There is an interesting parallel here with [171] the ear of corn as a "ceremonial mother" in the Southwestern United States. If somebody expresses too strong admiration of a child, fire must be passed near it, or spittle rubbed over its forehead; otherwise the baby will become ill. Infants are particularly susceptible to the evil eye. To cure one that has been thus cursed, a female shaman is summoned, who passes a whole egg all over the baby's body. This is then opened, and the evil eye will be seen (by the shaman) in the yolk of the egg. They throw the egg into the river, or bury it in a secret place. Almost this same belief was found in Chontal of Tabasco. (Customs of San Fernando, Chapter VI, Volume I).

868 Children's education is simple and direct. As soon as a boy is old enough to work at all—at about five years of age—he is given a worn-down machete and set to cutting and hauling wood. From then on, following his father, he learns the man's duties. Girls are started with a miniature metate, grinding corn.

872 The Government maintains some public schools, such as at Bachajon Village, in which a few children learn to read and write, but in general great difficulty is found in obtaining scholars. As soon as they are old enough to study, they are strong enough to be of material help in the house and the farm; the parents do not like to relinquish what represents the interest on the investment of the price paid by the father for marriage, and the expense of the children's early years. Under the present administration, however, efforts to educate the Indians are being pushed as never before.

881 582 Puberty is attended by no observances of any kind. Marriage, which comes fairly early, has been previously described.

764 At death the ceremonial side is greatly emphasized. The funeral rites combine the idea of mourning with a general belief that the soul of the departed lingers for a brief time about his former domicile. When possible, the house of the deceased is abandoned for a short time, during which period, if any small animal is observed about the house, particularly at night, it is supposed to be his soul. No particular powers are ascribed to the soul, as far as could be found out, but it is considered poor company.

As it happened, a man was killed while we were at the Finca Encanto, whose funeral rites we could observe. His wife began mourning for him almost immediately—this being in the middle of the afternoon. His body was taken to another house, neighbour to his own. The true ceremonies began after nightfall. Accompanied [123] by Lazaro and Señor Aguilar, the writer went up with a gift of

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

fragments of prayers to him will be given when discussing medicine. Distinct from the guardian of the cornfields, he is known only by name to the ordinary Indians, and mention of him appeared to alarm them a good deal.

Drunkenness still retains some of its old, ceremonial significance, in its association with fiestas, funeral rites, and particularly with medicine, under which head it will be more fully taken up.

There are a number of beliefs and practices, no matter what their origin, which, as they exist today, must be considered as superstitions rather than religion. Of such a type is the belief mentioned when speaking of hunting, that painting the bullet red would make it go further. This is of interest in the study of survivals, in view of the importance of the colour red in pre-Christian times. It may be equally well argued, however, that the red in this case represents the blood of the animal to be slain. Most of the superstitions are concerned with the *nagual* or the soul.

The set of ideas that constitute Nagualism is derived from ancient and important beliefs. The *nagual*, *tcul-el* (*tcul*, "holy," *-el* "the, the one"), is a companion-spirit to a man, taking the form of some animal. The stronger the *nagual*, the stronger the man, thus one with a jaguar for a familiar could work any kind of magic or other harm on one with a rabbit. We were told both that the *nagual* was assigned by popular consent, due to people's opinion of a man, and that it was seen in a dream. A man who has a quarrel with another will deliberately shoot animals of the species of the other's *nagual*, hoping to hit the particular one associated with his enemy. If that one dies, the man dies, and vice versa. Thus, it is plain that there is no idea of association with a whole class of animals, but only with one individual of a class.

According to Nuñez de la Vega,* in the seventeenth century the *naguál* was assigned by a shaman, who took it from the name of the day on which the individual was born. The child was later caused to see his *nagual* . . . *"se abrazan cariñosamente con su nagual, que por arte diabólica se le apparece muy doméstica y supersticiosamente cariñosa, aunque sea una bestia muy feroz, como leon, tigre, etc."*† According to Sapper (1925) exactly the same practices obtain in Guatemala today, the animal being caused to appear by means of hypnotism.

It is possible that further investigation would show a similar manner of choosing the *nagual* among the modern Tzeltal. How-

*Nuñez de la Vega, 1702, loc. cit.
†Extract in Paniagua, 1908, Page 57.

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9

fire and then hung up to destroy the impression and prevent leaving behind with it a portion of the soul, on which magic could be worked. Our own observation was that this precaution was carelessly observed.

Although magic may be worked on impressions on leaves, bits of hair, earth from fields, etc., the Indians showed no objection at all to being photographed beyond a certain embarrassment, and very little to being drawn. Often they asked to be photographed, and at some villages posed readily for sketches.

Although, according to Nuñez de la Vega,* there were originally several classes of shamans among these tribes, at present they seem to have narrowed down to one medicine-man type. Primarily these are doctors, but in their practice they preserve certain priestly characteristics. They have a real pharmacopeia, and Ladinos and occasional foreigners who have tried their skill testify to the effectiveness of the medicines.† All their knowledge, however, is kept in greatest secrecy. Just enough medicine is administered at once for a dose, the shaman watching to see that it is consumed, and none held out for identification. Of these we were able to find out virtually nothing. Serpent fat, *junto-tcan*, is in common use as a rub for colds. Head-aches and extreme drunkenness are treated by cutting the forehead with a bit of sharp glass, and bleeding is resorted to in some other cases. The use of the tourniquet in cases of snake-bite is widely known.

All applications of medicine are accompanied by prayers recited in such a way as to be unintelligible to lay hearers. The prayers are an essential part of the treatment.

Shamans are trained from early infancy, being selected probably by the older practitioners. One of them takes the student in hand and teaches him prayers and medicines proper to his particular specialty. With this goes a certain amount of plain magic. Whether a man may then study under others and continue learning is not known; however, they vary in reputation both for their ability at curing, and for clairvoyance, casting spells, etc. Casting spells is a sort of reverse function of doctoring, the man who can cure disease being, obviously, able also to cause it.

One of the two words given for a shaman, *poci'*, shows an interesting resemblance to the Tzeltal for rum, *poc*. This similarity gains importance in view of the real connection between curing and drinking. A shaman definitely will not perform unless he is more

*Op. Cit.
†Cf. Sapper, 1925.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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The four sides of the square house are protected by palm crosses which were nailed to each of the four corner posts during the ceremony of the initiation of the house. These crosses prevent the entry of evil. A fifth cross on the door post, replaced each year on the Day of the Cross, ensures the guardianship of San Pedro the Martyr, the Lord of Lightning.[5]

The idea of the similarity in substance between a house and its inmates originates in the notions about soil (*lum*) and mud (*ʔaẗ'al*). An origin myth concerning the creation of man indicates that God created man out of soil and this mythical identification is reiterated in prayers when the fleshy part of the body is referred to as *hlumeletik*, our soil, and *kaẗ'aletik*, our mud. Whatever soil man comes into contact with—in his house, in the backyard, or in his travels, may contain some of his soul. This belief is demonstrated in the following practices: When a person's soul is lost because of a fright, such as falling or "seeing a spirit," the soil where the incident occurred is scraped into a shirt or skirt belonging to him and deposited in the soil below the head of his bed. Some older informants say that the soil from beneath the bed is scraped up and deposited in the coffin of a deceased inmate of the house, but I have never seen this done. This intimate relation between soul and soil was best illustrated to us when our landlord refused to let us put a cement floor in the interior of his house since it would interfere with the practices described above and other customs in the house ceremonies mentioned below.

The house is constructed in two stages. The completion of each stage requires a ceremony linking the spirits of the inmates to that of the dwelling. The first stage is the erection of the house posts and the wooden frame. When the roof is covered with wood shingles, thatch, or tile, the family may set up temporary walls of boards. They wait until the rainy season to complete the second stage of building up the walls with mud. The first ceremony, called "fiesta for the house," is for "the spirit which resides in the posts," and the second, called "meal for the house," is to feed "the spirit of the house earth." People believe that the mud walls, like their fleshy counterpart, the human body, require nourishment.

5. San Pedro Martyr is referred to by the Indians as *Tatik Martil* and is identified with the pre-Conquest deity Lord of Lightning, or *Tatik Caʔuk*.

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342 527 789 *First house fiesta.* In preparation for the fiesta to inaugurate the wooden frame of the house, the older men of the household and the curers make palm crosses called *Tatik Martil,* another reference to San Pedro Martyr. Older men are chosen to do this task because their procreative powers will not be endangered by handling this powerful symbol. Branches of the bushes growing near the springwater of San Nicolás are cut by the younger men of the household to be arranged in an arch, while the women make incense burners and clay candle holders. The protective symbols used in the fiesta—the arch of branches and flowers, the candles, liquor, handrolled cigarettes, palm crosses, and springwater in a gourd—are arranged before the center post of the back wall of the house.

Fig. 1. Relatives Present at House Fiesta

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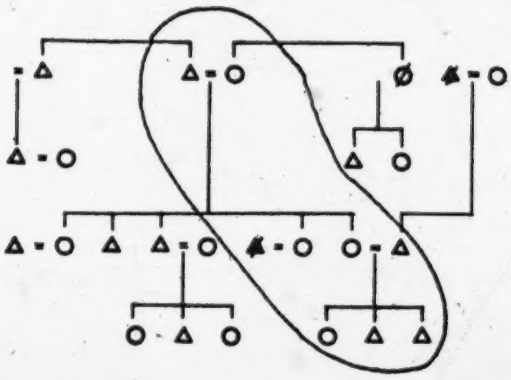

Encircled group will live in house.

342 527 756 788 The activities of a house fiesta observed in 1966 are described below.

The future occupants of the house sat in a row facing the curing arch. Two curers officiated, the elder a resident of the side of the dual division in which the houseowner lives and the second from the barrio in which his son-in-law, Santiago, was born. The elder curer lit the candles at the center post of the back wall, while the younger curer lit those at the center post in the middle wall. The mother of Santiago lit the incense and placed

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spring. The gourd is used as a container for the springwater because, like all growing plants and unlike metal or glass containers, it has a soul. The soul of the tobacco plant is considered particularly strong. The smoke of the candles and incense are the media through which prayers to the spirit of the house are transmitted.

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The house fiesta serves three functions: (1) introducing the spirit of the house inmates to the house spirit, (2) creating a harmonious setting for spiritual interaction of the members of the household and the house spirit, (3) protecting the house against the intrusion of evil. The introduction is achieved by brushing the household members with the branches from the spring, and the harmony is brought about by drinking liquor, playing the guitar, and dancing. The music of the seed gourd, the guitar, and sometimes a radio or phonograph makes the residents, their guests, and the house spirit happy, or "of one heart." Protection is insured by nailing the palm crosses representing the Lord of the Lightning to the house posts.

[789]

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Second house fiesta ("meal for the house"). When a meal is given to the spirit of the house earth, the house is arranged as for the house fiesta with curing arches set in front of the center posts at the back and middle walls. The same guests are invited as for the first fiesta. The family buys a sheep and slaughters it in the morning by stringing it up to the center post by it paws and slashing its jugular vein. When the blood has drained into the square hole opened at the base of the center post, the curer removes the head and buries it in the hole. Some curers bury the four paws as well, while others prefer to add an offering of five pieces of bread in a new pottery jar, twenty measures of chocolate, thirteen cigarettes, and a bottle of liquor covered with a new cloth. The head of the sheep is placed so that the eyes look up to watch over the inhabitants. Some refer to it as the *me?iltatil*, identifying it with the curers (who are called me?iltatil in the context of guardianship) and thus with the ancestor guardians.

During the house fiesta I observed in July 1967, an old curer who had officiated at the first ceremony served again. A neighbor, who was not related to the houseowners but who was skilled in butchering, slaughtered

18 When a serious illness caused by witchcraft has been cured, the patient must be protected against reentry of the evil by a gift of medicine to the house. Palm crosses are made for the corner posts and the entry, and a medicine consisting of a mixture of garlic and creosote, the seeds of mustard, and *polčan*, a "hot" herb, is mixed. As the crosses are nailed on the posts, the curer marks a cross with the medicine over the palm cross. This "covers the eyes of the evil spirit" so that it will not enter the house. In the Eyes of the Ancestors

The relationship between house spirit and the spirits of the residents is an uneasy one. Fear is associated with this capricious spirit, who might make an alliance with evil spirits, and whose power is evident only in sickness and in death, never in good deeds. A sense of alienation is conveyed in the fact that the house spirit and the spirits of the spring are conceived of as Ladinos. Spirits of the house and of the landscape are exacting landlords from whom the tenants expect nothing in return for their offerings but freedom from harm. Acceptance of the offerings seals a contract between spiritual occupants that must continually be renewed in order to maintain the balance of security expressed in the phrase "to be of one heart." The payment of a "tribute" in the form of food, liquor, and entertainment is part of a larger strategy by which these Indians ensure their survival by appeasement of overlords, demanding government officials, and the very rats which live in their houses and feed on the corn they store in the eaves.

The springs. Other meeting grounds for the spirits of people and places are the springs. The major spring, San Nicolás, is located on the southwestern periphery of the town. It provides drinking water and water for irrigating the cultivated lands. A second spring, called Pahaltón, lies closer to the village and provides a smaller stream of water directed into the canals irrigating the fields of the center. Some say the spirit of San Nicolás is a small Ladino boy; others say he is a man. The spirit of Pahaltón is a female non-Indian, or *Ladina*. The spirits of these waters are able to effect miraculous cures for patients who have lost their souls or those who are of two hearts because of upset social relations in the home. Male patients are brought to San Nicolás and female patients are brought to Pahaltón to seek a miracle. In the curing ceremony an arch of flowers entwined in pine boughs is constructed as closely as possible to the spring

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628 People with lands in hot country recount that during droughts the In-
796 dians from the neighboring town of Chamula have held rainmaking fies-
782 tas for which they solicit contributions from other Indians.

821
731 *The Chamulteco came to us and said, "Let all of us who have milpas contribute five pesos for a fiesta." He brought the candles. In the little hill there the people brought drums and flute. We ate chickens and drank liquor. For eleven hours he prayed, and in the afternoon it rained.*

628 The *kuriketik,* rural inhabitants of the colonia of San Vicente who
241 migrated to Amatenango from Chanal, have no irrigated lands and de-
789 pend directly on rainfall throughout the growing season. Indians of the center know of their practice of sticking their digging sticks into the ground with the points toward the sky "to puncture the clouds" when they have planted their milpa, but they do not imitate this practice. Control over the supply of water in the irrigated lands has apparently led to the neglect of supernatural appeals even where the canals do not supply water. Under pressure of extended drought, they will resort to spiritual intercession through Chamula or Oxchuk practitioners in whom they have some faith.

241 Acquiring the protection of the gods does not obviate the practical activ-
796 ities necessary in the cultivation of crops. Fiestas for the saints are a repay-
782 ment for services rendered in watching over the milpa. The sponsorship of
796 fiestas for the saints by the community ensures the protection for all of the crops, and general crop failure due to drought or high winds is explained as a result of mismanagement of these community-wide fiestas. The offering of candles to the spiritual owner of one's own milpa is a kind of individual insurance policy for future crops as well as a repayment for the gift of the corn harvest. The peasant notion of surplus value is implicit in this reciprocal relation: the payment, or gift, of two candles to the milpa spirit is far less than the value of the harvest. But the account is balanced by the expenditure of this surplus in communal fiestas.

Pottery Production

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178 Making pottery has been a speciality of the town since pre-Conquest
172 days. The old site of the town contains sherds of pottery which is remarkably similar in texture, design, and form to the pottery made now.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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231 cattle was seized by bandits or soldiers. It is "new" only in the size of the
233 holdings, which have expanded from ownership of one or two head per household, primarily useful as draft animals, to a herd as large as two hundred head belonging to the wealthiest man in town. Cattle rearing is now a capital investment for resale as well as for draft animals in plow agriculture.

233 The increasing herds have stimulated competition for community re-
311 sources. The control of communal grazing and waterhole rights is exer-
312 cised through the traditional dual division of the town, with rights to pas-
621 ture allocated on the basis of residence in the upper or lower barrio of the
575 center. An association of cattle owners has developed in each of the sections, and the leaders of each association call together all members to clean the water holes and repair the troughs. A recent project of the cattle association of the upper section has been the erection of a large cross at the
[789] water hole. The water had dried up the year before, and the installation of the cross was an attempt to ensure a continuous supply of water in the fu-
[796] ture. The priest blessed the cross in the dedication, and the fiscal and prayer-reciters adorn it each year on May 3, the Day of the Cross in the old Catholic calendar, along with other crosses of the village.

233 Cattle grazing is the source of much of the conflict in the town. The cat-
621 tle roam freely in the woods and communal pasture lands, and many are
578 lost or stolen. The cattle association has not fenced in the pasture in order
575 to control it. Their tactics have been punitive; they have raised funds from
627 among members to hire men to kill suspected cattle thieves. In the last twenty years, six men have been killed as cattle thieves, and at least three of those were known to be killed by men hired by the association, which then paid the court fines to set the killers free. The leader of one of the cattle associations was killed after an incident in which he fined a man who had failed to assist in cleaning the water holes. The fine of 2 pesos per head of cattle represented a large fee for the man, who had sixty head. He refused to pay more than half, since he said he had not been notified.
[754] When his daughter later died of illness, he blamed her death on witchcraft exercised by the cattle association leader, and later killed him.

231 Cattle are only minimally exploited as a resource. The cattle are not
434 butchered locally since there is not a large enough market, but are sold to

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sulted with each other to determine who was bringing in the heat. They privately disposed of the evil by causing the evildoer to die of an illness. At the time of my stay, suspicion of the curers meant that a public hearing was held in the town hall to determine who the guilty person was; usually one of the curers themselves was suspected (Chapter 9).

The curers formerly demonstrated their beneficial power by bringing rain during a fiesta held in the cave of the ancestors. This is described by an informant:

When the pueblo lacked rain in the growing season of corn in May and June, the leading curers went with the other curers, the fiscal, the alfereces, the mayordomos, and the women prayer-reciters to the cave. All the women carried candles of a peso or fifty-cent size and incense burners. They drank a great deal of liquor at the mouth of the cave and then entered to dance. The mayordomos played the guitar, the drum, and flute as the women danced and the curers prayed to the me?tiktatik. There used to be a spring in this cave, people say, and the ancestors granted water from it when they were given a fiesta.

The last fiesta for rain occurred about 1950. The whole town contributed two pesos for the liquor and candles. The leading curer then was Juliano, a man recognized for his powers in curing and in bringing rain. He told the people that he spoke to the me?tiktatik who, he said, were dressed in the old style [*a shirt worn over short cotton pants still used by older men of the town, and the handwoven hat worn by alfereces today*]. *The curers told the people that it would rain, and the afternoon of the fiesta, it came down hard.*

There is no longer faith that the ancestors live in the cave, nor that the present curers could speak to them if they did.

The growing discontent with the curers, the suspicion that they are responsible for much of the witchcraft, is reflected in the account of an older informant.

The curer O. K. told me that the curers ate the spirits of sick people who were going to die. The sick people would come to ask the curers for

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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not stand. Only one stands—he who does not respect us." The Virgin Mother said, "Yes, I saw another one who walks well watching our children." Jesus asked, "Did you get a good look where he walks?" His mother replied, "Yes, indeed, I saw him." Christ asked, "If you know, what are we going to do there where he walks?" "I do not know what we shall do," said his mother.

Then, after a pause, Christ said, "Now I know what we will do! Do you know what hour he passes?" The Virgin answered, "Yes, I do."

"Good. I am going to make a little house and put a Victrola, an accordion, and also a violin in it. I will put a marimba, a guitar, and a harp on each side of the road. And I shall also put trago and beer, everything that is good to drink. When you see him coming, we will begin to play the marimba and guitar and all the music on both sides of the road. When you see the King of Evil, we will begin the dance and drink trago—everything there is—and he will look at what we drink."

The Virgin said, "I will invite him to dance a little." "Yes, you remain here dancing, and I shall go for a moment to see his children [corn plants]. Continue dancing while I go out to look," said Christ. The Virgin answered, "Good. Good."

And so the Devil passed by. When Christ left, the Virgin began to dance with the Devil. They drank more liquor to make him "lose his heart" [get drunk]. The Virgin did not see that the Devil put his tail in half of the bottle. It is because of this that the people say liquor is one-half Devil and one-half God.

Meanwhile, Jesus arrived where the children of the Devil were. He made no more than the sign of the cross, and all the children of the Devil died. It is after the Children of the Devil died that Christ seized control of the world.

And so it is true that we are his children who came out of Jesus Christ.

In this tale, evil is personified in the enemy of the Catholic Church, the King of the Jews who is also the pre-hispanic "King of Evil." The Virgin Mother is concerned with preventing the world from reverting to the situation in which people were born helpless, with just one arm and one leg, as it was when the Devil was in control. To prevent this, when the moon is "sick" or in eclipse, the people must call her back to life. The strategy is

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to make a great deal of noise by striking hoes, firing rifles, blowing the horns of bulls, and striking gourds. The logic of this behavior can be understood from the following statement of an informant: "The sickness of the moon is a result of the conflict of the sun with the moon. The noise we made frightens the father sun so that he will stop fighting the moon. If he were to win, the people would die, and new people would be born with only one leg and one arm."[4]

We have in this story what appears to be an overlay of post-hispanic mythology, in which the Devil personifies evil forces, superimposed on a prehispanic mythological identification of the powers of both good and evil in single cosmological deities. Whereas in the previous myth it is the Devil, the King of the Jews, who caused all of the children of Jesus to die and to be reborn with only one arm and one leg, in this statement it is the sun who can effect the same reversal of nature. The sun, Tatik K'alik, has the power to cause the milpa to grow, but by staying out too long, it can burn the crop. Similarly lightning, Tatik Ča'uk, may bring rain, but can destroy the milpa with the winds that precede the rain or kill man and destroy his house. Man is responsible for determining how the force of the gods will be directed.

The guardianship of the sun and the moon over the people of the world serves to control or at least restrain the behavior of people. Since both of them "walk alone," without companionship, they become jealous if they see sexual relations performed by people in the milpa. Since all legal sexual relations are carried out in the relative privacy of the house, it is only those who seek illicit relationships who retreat to the milpa, and so this restraint has a prohibitive effect on unsanctioned sexual behavior. If the moon sees someone in the milpa at night, she refuses to retire and stays out, not letting her son the sun rise. Similarly, when the sun sees someone in the milpa in the daytime, he refuses to retire, burning the milpa with his hot rays.

The lord spirits of the east. There is another category of spirits which is ill defined and not many people know. These are the spirits of

4. The same behavior, that of making noise during an eclipse, is found in the Maya Indian community of Cantel, Guatemala, but there it is interpreted as a means of calling the sick grandmother back to life by showing that her grandchildren care about her.

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776 821 539 177 *and so he returned and the Lord of Lightning gave him another job—that of making lightning flashes.*

San Pedro now gives protection to the people from the power he wields. 776 177 789 During his fiesta, palm crosses are distributed to everyone who attends mass; if a man walks with a cross tucked in his hat or a woman wears one strung on her neck, he or she will not be struck by lightning. The houses are similarly protected with palm crosses.

776 177 Santa Lucía is the only other saint in the local roster who is described as being "very powerful." She is supposed to be able to cure diseases of the eyes. The image of her in the church shows her holding two eyes reflected in a small mirror in the palm of her hand. The story which explains why 776 she holds them was told me with an expression of complete belief, and 177 other informants vouch for its authenticity: 539 821

Formerly, Santa Lucía used to "talk with" [a euphemism for "had an affair with"] Santo Tomás of Oxchuk. Santo Tomás loved her because she was pretty. Santa Lucía was so in love with Santo Tomás that she gave him a gift of her eyes. He did not want them—he was frightened by the gift—and he returned them. From then on, she did not speak to him. Now, when a child has sickness of his eyes, his mother buys medicine and takes it to Santa Lucía who gives her blessing, and the child gets well.

They say the lightning struck the church in Oxchuk, and it was the fault of Santa Lucía. But then a few years ago it struck our church. And that was the fault of Santo Tomás. He is very strong.

"I am going to see how she will pay for that!" said Santo Tomás.

And in ten years a storm came and broke the tower of our church. There was a meeting of the principales. They said, "Let's sell the cattle of Santa Lucía so that we can build a new church." The tower was struck another time. All the married men had to contribute forty pesos each. We made it out of metal this time, because Santo Tomás is very strong.

821 776 On a conscious level, most people know that the earth is round, and that the sun revolves around it, but the motivating power behind natural phenomena is still conceived in personalized terms. One informant, when asked why the sun rises and sets, ventured cautiously, "I have heard that our Father, the Sun, revolves and that he goes down below the earth. But

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Religious Behavior

Socialization of the child includes teaching him how to adjust to spirits of the house and of the surrounding hills and springs as well as to people in his social environment. He learns the obligations he owes to these spirits in the rituals of house inauguration and curing. Place spirits are given an ethnic identity. The ancestor figures who live in the cave are Indians from whom all the people originate. The Ladino spirits residing in the houses and springs are a mythological projection of a conquered people who have learned to coexist with their conquerors by paying tribute of candles, food, liquor, and entertainment. If the spirits are not won over, they will admit the evil spirits who bring sickness and death. Their presence is known only by the trouble they permit rather than by good occurences; the miracles they perform are an undoing of the harm they have permitted.

The belief in the potentially dangerous nature of these spirits when their envy or appetite is aroused is linked to an understanding that men and gods alike are jealous and vindictive. It generates behavior that is in conformity with that of the ancestors. A sense of security is reinforced by the protective symbols of incense, the cross of palm hung on the entrance posts of the yard and house, candles which "blind the eye of the devil," and garlic mixed with hot herbs which exude an odor that evil spirits dislike. When the uneasy contract between spiritual and human coresidents is upset, a curing ritual is performed to make everyone "of one heart." Behavior with respect to both spirits and people stems from a policy of appeasement through entertainment and liquor provided in household ceremonials.

Behavior differs in regard to the category of saints called "spirits in the heaven" and those called "spirits in the church." Spirits of the heavens have incorporated pre-Conquest deities with those introduced by the missions. They are a more powerful force influencing human moral behavior. Illicit sexual relations carried out in the milpa by day are believed to arouse the envy of "Our Father the Sun" who will cause the milpa to burn by refusing to give way to rain. Similarly "Our Grandmother the

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struck by lightning on two occasions. The solution was to rebuild the tower of metal so that Santo Tomás could not demolish it if he struck again, a defensive reaction which is typical of the Indians in their extra-community relations. When an eclipse of "Our Grandmother the Moon" occurred during my stay in town, everyone went to her assistance, banging metal tools and pots, in what was believed to be a fight with the sun.

The emphasis on self-recrimination and guilt in explaining failure minimizes the build-up of protest. Economic hardship attributed to a man's own improvidence in relation to his fellow man and God are accepted as his lot in life. The drama of the curing ritual projects the Indians' sense of their own guilt for the suffering and poverty they endure.

Political Behavior

The structure of the civil hierarchy has been maintained but organizational changes have occurred which have weakened the basis for it. The alternation of offices between church and civil positions survives in the lower levels, but the new leaders in civil affairs now begin in the Ejido Commission, and few of those who pass as president take on posts in the religious hierarchy. The appearance of continuity has been maintained in communal rituals in which the principales provide the link with the past and the alfereces, until 1966, were the link between civil and religious wings; but in the day-to-day running of the town, the officials do not act on these premises. The balance between officials from each side of the dual division has been upset by the population increase on one side. The abolition of the institution of alfereces gives public recognition to the growing awareness of imbalance. Moreover, the factions based on the new trucking cooperatives that cut across the dual division reduce the effectiveness of the dual division in channeling conflict.

Behavioral deviation from the norms is present in all societies and is not in itself an index to structural change. This comes about when new interpretations are given to events that undermine confidence in existing institutions and leaders. Political conflicts in the past were interpreted as a contest between members of the sides of the dual division and hostility